

Dear FCC Commissioners & Staff:

My name is Paul Vingiello. I am the operations manager for Bayou Internet in Monroe, LA, Vicksburg Online in Vicksburg, MS and Mississippi Internet in Meridian MS. We started our business in 1990 and incorporated in 1995. We have over 17,000 customers, most of whom are in rural Northeast Louisiana and rural central Mississippi.

We offer many services that our local phone company, Bell South does not. We offer setup and one on one training as well as online training in many areas. We helped our local schools get online long before e-rate was around. Many of the schools could not afford to pay, so services were (and in several cases are still being) donated. We were providing local dial up service to hundreds of customers in many rural areas for years before Bell South did.

We have had our rounds with Bell South over service over the years. Once they were not delivering our customers to us from one rural area for several months because they did not have the capacity (as we later found out). The fact that they did not have capacity did not stop them from taking our order for the lines nor did it stop them from charging us for them even though they could not deliver calls on them. After we complained about the problem for months, they finally admitted that the problems were theirs and that they would get them fixed in a couple of months. When we complained, they finally agreed to refund us for the lines that we were unable to use for several months. This did nothing for our customers in that area that left us because they assumed it was our fault that they could not connect to us.

We have gotten some relief from a CLEC that came to town. We not only get better pricing, but the connection speeds for our customers are much better now as well. The turn around time on getting lines installed has been cut in half also.

DSL&that•s a sad subject. Bell South is charging us \$33 plus tax monthly for the •accessory• to be added to an existing line plus a one time set up fee of \$110. I also have to have a trunk that can handle around 60 customers to bring the calls back to me that costs \$250+ per month plus an install fee. Now I have to compete with Bell South selling this service to my residential customer base for \$49.95 per month with no set up fee, a free \$150 modem, and a free month of service with a minimal term commitment level. My costs work out to be over \$55 per month plus the cost of the modem. The only thing that keeps us close is that our costs are about the same for a business connection and Bell gets \$79.95 per month for that service. I get to make a small profit selling this service.

It makes me sick to hear that the FCC is even considering letting the Bells win the battle because the FCC can•t force the Bells to do what they were required to do in the previous Telecommunications Act. The answer is not to take away the rights of the ISP to have access to the network, but to force Bell to provide access to the system for a reasonable price. The country and in particular the rural areas will suffer if Bell has total control of who will get high-speed service.

We had SDSL available a year before Bell South started ADSL in our area. Bell fixed that by changing the costs. Bell made it where you had to order the line (with a \$500 set up fee) before you could see if service was available to a customer. There was no refund if service was not available, nor would they do anything (remove a bridge tap, etc.) to get the line set up if it was not already perfect. Few customers were willing to take a chance on finding out if

service was available at a cost of over \$500. Now Bell wants to take ADSL away from us too.

Please help to keep the Independent ISP, those of us who pioneered the movement of the Internet to the rural areas, alive and well. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Paul Vingiello
1109 Hudson Lane
Monroe, LA 71201